

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 H-02 NSC-05 SY-05 SCA-01
/033 W

-----034574 220039Z /72

P 212340Z JUN 77 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3006

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FOR: SCS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, MX
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES REGARDING COMPLAINT BY
CAL FULLERTON

REF: 1) DEPARTMENT OF STATE OM OF APRIL 6, CONGRESSMAN
GARRY BROWN INTERESTED.
2) DEPARTMENT OF STATE OM OF APRIL 6, SENATOR
ROBERT P. GRIFFIN INTERESTED.
3) DEPARTMENT OF STATE OM OF APRIL 18, SENATOR
DONALD W. RIEGLE, JR. INTERESTED.
4) DEPARTMENT OF STATE OM OF APRIL 18, WHITE HOUSE.

EMBASSY RECEIVED FOUR SEPARATE OPERATIONS MEMORANDUMS
REGARDING THE COMPLAINT OF MR. CAL FULLERTON OF 638 WEST
KALAMO HIGHWAY, CHARLOTTE, MIAMI, FLORIDA, CONCERNING
TREATMENT RECEIVED DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE EMBASSY.

EMBASSY PREPARED REPLIES WITH DIRECT REPLY TO FULLERTON
BEING SENT ON MAY 8 AS INSTRUCTED IN REF. 4. IT WAS NOT
UNTIL RECENTLY THAT WE REALIZED THE OTHER THREE REPLIES
HAD NOT BEEN TRANSMITTED.

IN ORDER NOT TO FURTHER DELAY THESE COMMUNICATIONS, WE
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ARE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF OUR ORIGINAL REPLY TO
FULLERTON AND REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONVEY THE
SUBSTANCE OF THE LETTER WITH OUR APOLOGIES TO SENATORS
GRIFFIN AND RIEGLE AND CONGRESSMAN BROWN.

HEREWITH FOLLOWS TEXT: QUOTE, DEAR MR. FULLERTON: PRESI-
DENT CARTER HAS ASKED ME TO REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF MARCH

21, CONCERNING YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE EMBASSY DURING FEBRUARY.

THE EMBASSY DOES NOT RECEIVE MANY COMPLAINTS SUCH AS YOURS, BECAUSE WE CONTINUALLY EMPHASIZE TO OUR EMPLOYEES THE NEED FOR COURTEOUS TREATMENT OF THE PUBLIC. WHEN I DO RECEIVE A COMPLAINT I TRY TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.

YOUR FIRST COMPLAINT WAS AGAINST THE MARINE GUARD POSTED AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE EMBASSY, WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE BUILDING AGAINST POSSIBLE TERRORIST ATTEMPTS BY ENSURING THAT UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE BUILDING, AND THAT PERSONS WHO DO ENTER THE BUILDING ARE DIRECTED BY A SIGN AT THE GATE THROUGH A ROPED-OFF PASSAGE TO THE RECEPTIONIST, WHO INQUIRES INTO THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT AND MAKES OUT A PASS TO ADMIT THEM TO THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE. THE MARINE GUARD CHECKS THE PASS, SEARCHES ANY HANDBAGS OR BRIEFCASES, AND DIRECTS VISITORS TO THE BANK OF ELEVATORS TO THE RIGHT OF HIS DESK. HE IS NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE HIS POST AT ANY TIME. THEREFORE, WHEN YOU FIRST ATTEMPTED TO PASS BY HIS DESK, HE DIRECTED YOU TO THE RECEPTIONIST FOR THE NECESSARY PASS, AND WHEN YOU LATER STARTED OFF IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, HE CALLED OUT TO YOU TO DIRECT YOU TOWARD THE ELEVATORS. HE RECALLS HAVING TOLD YOU TO TAKE THE ELEVATOR TO THE FIRST FLOOR, BUT IT MAY BE UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT YOU DID NOT UNDERSTAND HIS DIRECTIONS. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO INTENTIONAL RUDENESS ON HIS PART, I HAVE ASKED THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE MARINE SECURITY GUARD UNIT TO BRING THIS INCIDENT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MARINES AND TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF POLITE AND HELPFUL RECEPTION OF VISITORS TO THE EMBASSY.

YOUR SECOND COMPLAINT WAS AGAINST THE CONSULAR ASSISTANT/ RECEPTIONIST IN THE CITIZENS CONSULAR SERVICES BRANCH, TO WHOM YOU REPORTED THE THEFT OF YOUR BILLFOLD. HIS JOB REQUIRES HIM TO HANDLE INQUIRIES TO THE BRANCH BOTH IN PERSON AND BY TELEPHONE. FOR THAT REASON, HE WAS INTERRUPTED SEVERAL TIMES WHILE TALKING WITH YOU, AND APPARENTLY LEFT YOU WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO BE OF HELP. HE INQUIRED FIRST ABOUT YOUR TOURIST CARDS, BECAUSE HAD THEY BEEN STOLEN WITH YOUR WALLET, THE EMBASSY WOULD HAVE ASSISTED YOU WITH THE MEXICAN IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES IN ARRANGING YOUR DEPARTURE FROM MEXICO. HE DID NOT ENCOURAGE YOU TO REPORT THE THEFT TO THE MEXICAN POLICE BECAUSE IN FACT THIS WOULD HAVE TAKEN UP A GREAT DEAL OF YOUR TIME AND WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE SERVED NO USEFUL PURPOSE.

THE EMBASSY UNFORTUNATELY DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT PERSONNEL TO SEND SOMEONE TO ACCOMPANY AMERICAN CITIZENS TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT INCIDENTS OF THIS TYPE, AND IT IS EXTREMELY RARE FOR STOLEN PROPERTY, SUCH AS PURSES AND BILLFOLDS, TO BE RECOVERED AND TURNED OVER TO THE EMBASSY FOR RETURN TO THE OWNER. FROM YOUR DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT, I BELIEVE THAT HE GAVE YOU BASICALLY CORRECT INFORMATION, BUT HE APPARENTLY DID NOT EXPLAIN THE SITUATION CAREFULLY ENOUGH SO THAT YOU

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COULD UNDERSTAND WHY NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS REALLY FEASIBLE. AS HE IS NORMALLY COURTEOUS AND HELPFUL TO THE HUNDREDS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO COME TO THE EMBASSY FOR HELP, I BELIEVE THAT THE PROBLEM LIES IN THE FACT THAT, HANDLING BOTH TELEPHONE INQUIRIES AND VISITORS, HE IS UNABLE TO GIVE ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO EACH CALLER. I HAVE THEREFORE ASKED THE CHIEF OF THE CITIZENS CONSULAR SERVICES BRANCH TO ARRANGE TO HAVE ANOTHER ASSISTANT HANDLE TELEPHONE INQUIRIES, THUS LEAVING THE RECEPTIONIST FREE TO ATTEND TO VISITORS.

PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES FOR YOUR RECEPTION AT THE EMBASSY, AND MY THANKS FOR CALLING THE INCIDENT TO OUR ATTENTION SO THAT WE COULD TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE OUR RECEPTION OF AMERICANS WHO CALL ON US IN THE FUTURE.

SINCERELY YOURS, VERNON D. MCANINCH, CONSUL GENERAL
END QUOTE. THOMPSON

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